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Nuremberg, 28 June 1948

Paul Joosten

PAUL A. JOOSTEN

General Secretary
International Military
Tribunal

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HOW THE GERMANS ARE STARVING POLAND

In the introduction to No. 55 of the POLISH FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW *we pointed out that Germany is pursuing different political and economic objects in the various parts of occupied Poland, and that the methods applied by the respective German occupation authorities are also different, in accordance with the role which is assigned to the particular area. These differences are also manifest in the sphere of food supplies and in the food rationing system.*

No. 55 of the POLISH FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW *was devoted to the food rationing system in force in Poland's western provinces, i.e., that part of Poland which has been arbitrarily incorporated with the Reich.*

The present number discusses the food rationing system in the General Gouvernement.

FOOD RATIONING IN THE GENERAL GOUVERNEMENT

The conditions of existence for Polish citizens living in the General Gouvernement are still worse than those in the "incorporated" areas. This artificial creation, shut away behind unnatural boundaries arbitrarily imposed by the Germans, and cut off from the rest of the country, has a much less fertile soil than that of Western Poland. On the other hand, it has a much greater density of population. Before the war the area was unable to grow sufficient food to support its inhabitants, and had to make good the deficiencies by bringing in food from the more fertile lands of Western Poland. Even in years of good harvests some 40,000 tons of wheat and over 200,000 tons of rye had to be brought in to cover the shortage. During the war operations of 1939 agriculture in the General Gouvernement suffered seriously, and there was a great decline in agricultural production in consequence. In addition the continual influx of large numbers of Poles, now aggregating nearly two millions, whom the Germans mercilessly drove out of the "incorporated" areas, contributed its share to the progressive deterioration in the food situation.

Economic Exploitation

The Germans have no positive plan of economic policy in regard to the General Gouvernement, and aim solely at extracting the maximum benefit from the area for the Reich itself. This "reservation for the Polish population" has got not only to feed itself, but also to supply as much food as possible first and foremost for the great numbers of German soldiers.

The economic aims which the German authorities in the General Gouvernement pursue could not be better formulated than they were in a secret circular issued by Governor-General Frank on January 25th, 1940, Nr. G.B. 1/40. This circular, a copy of which is in the possession of the Polish Government in London, lays down a detailed programme for the economic exploitation of the country. Issued with the authority of Field-Marshal Goering, it opens with the following concise statement of the principle by which the economic exploitation of the General Gouvernement was to be governed:

"In view of the present requirements of the Reich's war economy, no fundamentally long term policy can be pursued in the General Gouvernement. On the contrary, the economy of the General Gouvernement must be so directed that it should at the earliest possible moment produce the maximum of what is possible to extract from the economic resources of the General Gouvernement for the immediate reinforcement of the Reich military strength." *(Im Hinblick auf die derzeitigen Wehrwirtschaftlichen Bedürfnisse des Reichs kann vorerst im Generalgouvernement grundsätzlich keine Wirtschafts-*

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politik auf lange Sicht getrieben werden. Es ist vielmehr erforderlich, die Wirtschaft im Generalgouvernement so zu lenken, dass sie binnen kürzester Frist Leistungen vollbringt, die das Höchstmass dessen darstellen, was zur sofortigen Verstärkung der Wehrkraft des Reichs aus der Wirtschaftskraft des Generalgouvernements herausgeholt werden kann.)

Later in the circular, in a passage referring to the methods that should be adopted to secure the accomplishment of these tasks, we learn that:

As far as supplying the population is concerned, care should be taken in the first place that those employed in key industries and war industries receive sufficient to maintain their full efficiency (*Leistungs fähigkeit*), " while the rest of the population must during the period of scarcity be reduced to a minimum of food " (*während die übrige Bevölkerung während der Dauer der Lebensmittelknappheit auf ein Minimum an Lebensmitteln angewiesen bleiben muss*).

The wording of the instructions is at this point exceptionally clear. It is only those engaged in German war industries, numerically few, who are to receive rations which will allow them to maintain their strength and keep physically fit. The rest of the population (*die übrige Bevölkerung*) must content itself with a minimum.

The term " rest of the population " includes women, children, the clergy and the scientists, the artists and the teachers, former government officials and representatives of free professions, workers not engaged in German war industries, merchants and craftsmen. In other words: almost everyone. All these people must be content with a minimum of rations. What these are will be shown below.

In accordance with these instructions, the occupying authorities have done everything they can to carry out the outlined programme to the utmost detail and absolutely regardless of all other considerations. For this purpose they employ quite different methods and a completely different system from those we have already studied in connection with food supplies to the " incorporated " areas of Poland.

The Food Distribution System

When discussing the food rationing system in the " incorporated " areas, we did not need to outline the German food supplies policy in any broader sense of the words. In Poland's western areas everything connected with the feeding of the population was organized along German lines. In particular the German authorities systematically met all the requirements of a war-time food supply policy, introducing a uniform restriction of consumption, stabilizing prices, and giving every citizen the possibility of buying food in accordance with the officially fixed ration, larger for Germans, much smaller for Poles. These results were achieved by introducing rigid, but comparatively high, maximum prices which in general are observed, by the complete sequestration of all articles of prime necessity, and finally by the organization of an efficiently functioning machinery of distribution.

In the General Gouvernement a totally different situation prevails, as the result of the fundamentally different policy pursued by the Germans in this part of the Polish State. Their attitude to the area and its natural resources, its economic potential and human material was purely spoliatory, and in consequence they were not in the least interested in organizing a sound economy or in properly satisfying the needs of the Polish population. For these reasons their approach to the problem of food distribution was quite distinctive. We must devote rather more space to this question, as unless the reader is given some idea of the distribution system adopted in the area he will not be able to understand the method of rationing employed.

As during the military operations of September, 1939, the area which became the General Gouvernement suffered much more severely than other parts of Poland, the occupying authorities found many spheres completely disorganized: industry, trade, finance, and, above all, agriculture, were in chaos. The difficulties in regard to food supplies were increased by the disorganization which had occurred in the machinery of distribution. Before the war wholesale and retail trade were largely in the hands of the Jewish population, and many of them had fled before the Germans, while those who remained were eliminated from all commercial and trade operations.

Driven by the necessity to get hold of agricultural products at all costs, during the early days of their occupation, the Germans resorted to the most primitive form of requisitioning, carried out with the utmost ruthlessness. The determined and extremely effective opposition put up by the farmers to this plan caused it to break down almost completely, and the occupying authorities had in consequence to resort to a system of compulsory quotas imposed for almost every type of agricultural produce. This particularly applied to the large farms, for which frequently a quota was fixed equal to the whole of their production. In the case of the smaller peasant holdings it is in practice impossible to control each separately, and so general quotas were assigned to each region, county and district. In fixing the quotas the occupying authorities are governed by the following considerations:

(*a*) The total quota for the entire General Gouvernement area is fixed not in accordance with the expected harvest or production, but in accordance with German requirements.

(*b*) The quotas are divided up and allocated mechanically, without taking into consideration the quality of the soil, the productive capacity of the individual farms or the consumption of the individual farmer families.

(*c*) Any surpluses that may be left when the quotas are met may not be thrown on to the open market, but are either requisitioned, or are sold through the agency of co-operative organizations controlled by the German authorities, and, of course, at official prices which are much below the market level.

The entire trade in agricultural produce has been concentrated in agricultural trading co-operatives, which in fact are by now semi-official organizations run by the German commissaries. All the co-operatives are organized on a highly centralized system and are ultimately responsible to the Central Agricultural Office at Cracow (the *Landwirtschaftliche Zentralstelle*). This office is responsible for extracting quotas, and in the event of peasant resistance the authorities step in and obtain the quota by force and terror. The priests, teachers and larger farmers answer with their freedom for the supply of the quotas assigned to the district, while any farmers who resist are deprived of their stock or evicted from their farms. Recently forced labour camps have been started for refractory farmers, and even peasants who could prove that their total harvest was less than the quota assigned to them have been sent to these camps.

All this system lacks its most important link, for the Central Agricultural Office has not got any adequate machinery of distribution with which to work. However, so far as the Germans are concerned, this is of little import, for the foodstuffs obtained by the Central Agricultural Office as the result of the quotas are destined first and foremost for the German troops on the Eastern front, the occupying troops in Poland, and the numerous German officials and their families. Obviously it is not possible to meet all these demands without starving the Polish population, whose requirements are the last to be considered. The food allocated to the people is handled by a strictly limited number of wholesalers, chosen by the Central Agricultural Office from political regards. As the quantity of food remaining for the needs of the local population is far from adequate to meet even the restricted rations, the towns have to rely largely on illegal supplies for their maintenance. When it is added that in the General Gouvernement the maximum prices are fixed at a very low level, much lower than those applying in the "incorporated" areas, it is obvious that the illegal supply of food finds its way to the people chiefly through the black market.

Certain methods adopted by the occupying authorities to obtain a strict control over all the agricultural production and reserve stocks are worth detailing.

(*a*) Every endeavour is made to take stock of, and specify all farm animals and livestock, which are left under the owner's care. It is forbidden to kill any livestock, even for one's personal needs, without the permission of the authorities. The sale and purchase of stock can only take place by permission, and only at designated markets. Dairy cattle can be purchased by farmers only directly from neighbours and by permission of the county department. Livestock supplied to the county markets comes only from compulsory quotas. Usually the stock is poor, lean and mainly young. They are primarily allocated to the privileged groups of the population. It is rare that anything is left on the markets of the larger towns for the Polish population after the needs of the privileged groups have been met.

(*b*) Farmers are under obligation to take all their milk to the nearest dairy. Detailed regulations lay down how much milk the farmer can use for his own needs and in what form. All butter is assigned almost exclusively to meet the needs of the privileged groups.

(*c*) A census is kept of all poultry, and the farmer is under obligation to hand over all eggs to the nearest collecting station of the Central Agricultural Office. In 1941 it was planned to collect 200 million eggs in this way. Only one-third of this figure was achieved, and then only as the result of bonuses being granted in the form of sugar allocations.

Shops for Germans

When discussing (in No. 55 of POLISH FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW) the general principles of food rationing in Poland we emphasized the fact that one of the basic features of the system adopted in the General Gouvernement is the separation of shops for Germans from shops for Poles. The question arises, why has this been adopted in this particular area, when it has not been introduced in the "incorporated" area, where the German oppression of the Polish population is far more intense?

The reason is closely bound up with the system of supply and distribution which we have just described. But there are other reasons also.

The universally adopted system of ration cards for all categories of the population has been introduced in the General Gouvernement also. But whereas in the "incorporated" areas the possession of a food ration card confers not only the right, but the possibility to obtain rationed articles in the prescribed quantities at the shops, in the General Gouvernement the occupying authorities have not organized any system of official allocations to Polish shops, or have done so only to a very limited extent. Thus the ration cards supplied to the Poles have no real backing, and in fact are little more than a scrap of paper. The only concern of the occupying authorities is to ensure that the German shops are supplied with all possible articles of food as plentifully as possible. This explains the interesting fact that neither in the official journals nor in the German Press is the food ration for the Germans in the General Gouvernement ever published. The announcements of rations to be found from time to time in the Polish language newspapers published by the Germans concern the Polish population exclusively, and, like the ration cards, are purely window-dressing.

Thus, whereas in the "incorporated" areas the persecution of the Polish population takes the form of much smaller food rations of basis articles and numerous interdictions on the sale of other articles of food to Poles, in the General Gouvernement the Poles are doubly discriminated against. On the one hand, as we shall see, the official rations are still smaller than those assigned to Poles in the "incorporated" areas; and on the other, even these miserable rations are unobtainable, as owing to the shortage of goods it is rarely possible to buy them in the shops. In consequence many ration coupons are simply not used.

It is of considerable interest to examine these two categories of shops more closely. At regular intervals the local German Press publishes lists of the German shops, run by Germans and open only to German customers. But apart from these lists, the reader is struck by the expensive and frequent advertising of certain of these shops. When it is remembered that owing to the war all the States of Europe are faced with great difficulties of food supplies, and that every citizen is satisfied if he can get his proper ration without much difficulty, the fact that a comparatively few German shops in the General Gouvernement are outvying one another in advertising is really surprising. This extraordinary phenomenon is due to the fact that the shops of this category are supplied almost as plentifully as in pre-war days, and suffer from a superfluity of goods. Butter, white rolls, white bread and flour, all kinds of tinned foods, sausage, ham, delicacies out of every Pole's reach, fill the shops of Meinl and other German firms. The Germans hold official ration cards, truly, but in practice they can buy everything without restriction and, as they themselves admit, in quantities far greater than can be purchased in Germany. In addition, they pay officially controlled prices for everything. They take full advantage of this situation not only to eat their fill, and to send food parcels in large quantities to Germany, but, still worse, to sell to quite a large extent illegally to the black market.

Only in exceptional cases are Poles allowed to shop in the German shops, and then only at fixed hours of the day and only to buy the officially fixed ration. The

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regulations are so strict on this point that even Polish domestic servants working for German families are not allowed to shop in German shops outside the hours permitted to Poles. In all open-air markets and shopping centres persons of German nationality have priority, and goods can be sold to Poles only after the Germans' requirements have been met. In Polish shops and stores also Germans have priority, and further are freed from the necessity to take their turn in the queue.

Information concerning the Polish shops can also be found in the Press, though it is of a very different nature. The expensive advertisements are replaced by official and semi-official notices, and news items. These notices consist of notifications of the days the Polish population can obtain food for certain types of coupons; bread is sold only three times weekly, meat only twice or thrice a month, etc. In the Polish Press published by the Germans we also find notices extending the validity of coupons beyond their original terminal date. Other notices are still more enlightening. For instance, in the NOWY KURJER WARSZAWSKI for October 7th, 1941, was the following announcement:

"The distribution of potatoes will begin in October with coupon 48 of the cards valid for that month. Potatoes will be sold first to those consumers who did not receive any in the spring. Therefore anyone who holds coupon 55 of the spring ration card still unused, should present it at the points for sale of potatoes."

Surely no one would willingly have gone without such a basic article of food as potatoes for six months? Surely the Poles in the General Gouvernement had not started a new hobby of collecting food ration cards and coupons? But perhaps the rations which the Poles obtained were too large, and so they accumulated a surplus? We shall see.

Adult and Child Rations

Tables I and II below show the food rations allocated to the Polish inhabitants of Warsaw. As the official data for the General Gouvernement are unfortunately only to a small extent available, the figures given in Tables I, II and III must be regarded as approximately illustrating the actual state of affairs.

TABLE I—AVERAGE RATIONS IN WARSAW FOR POLISH ADULT POPULATION IN 1941
(in grammes per week)

Food	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Bread	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750	1400–1750
Wheaten flour	100	100	×	100	100	100	×	×	×	×	100	×
Meat and meat products ...	75	100	100	100	75	150	100	125	125	100	100	125
Butter and fats	×	×	×	×	×	100	100	100	100	100	×	100
Sugar	100	100	100	250	100	125	×	200	×	×	200	125
Eggs (number per month)...	2	2	3	3	3	1	4	2	3	2	×	×
Cheese	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Macaroni	125	125	125	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Oatflakes or groats ...	×	×	×	×	×	50	50	800 (groats)	100	×	×	×
Coffee (substitute)...	–	–	–	40	12.5	–	–	–	20	12.5	–	45
Potatoes (in kilogrammes)	–	×	×	1½	×	–	–	–	–	7½	7½	–
Sweets	×	×	×	×	×	100	75	25	25	25	37.5	37.5

Dash (–) denotes that no ration was allotted. Cross (×) indicates that either no data or no reliable data are available.
Approximate equivalents: 100 grammes=3½ ozs.; 1000 grammes or a kilogram=2¼ lbs.

Explanation: In the case of certain items of food the rations for Poles are subject to changes, often from week to week. In such cases the figures given above are the weekly averages for periods of 4 weeks. When two figures are given they denote minimum and maximum.

TABLE II—AVERAGE RATIONS IN WARSAW FOR POLISH CHILDREN IN 1941
(in grammes per week)

Food	First Six Months	July	August	September	October	November	December
Bread	700–1050	700–1050	700–1050	700–1050	700–1050	700–1050	700–1050
Milk	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Special nutritious foods	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Biscuits	×	×	50	50	50	50	50

Cross (×) indicates that no data are available. Approximate equivalents: 100 grammes =3½ ozs.; 1000 grammes=2¼ lbs.

Explanation: Other foodstuffs for children are allocated according to the rations given in Table I. When two figures are given, they denote minimum and maximum.

The foregoing tables do not fully reflect the position in regard to the food-rationing system in the General Gouvernement. For a further characteristic feature of the system is that the Germans do not apply a single identical ration throughout the area. For comparison we give in Table III the rations in force in February, 1941, for the city of Cracow. (See page 5.)

By comparing with Table I we see that in that month the rations of certain articles (meat, jam, coffee) were much larger in Cracow than in Warsaw. This is to be explained by the fact that Cracow is the headquarters of the Governor General, and it is to the interests of the occupying authorities to see that the inhabitants of this city are relatively better off than those elsewhere.

The foregoing tables apply only to the Polish population. As we have said, the Germans receive rations

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at least as large as those issued to Germans in the "incorporated" areas.

TABLE III

AVERAGE RATIONS FOR POLES IN CRACOW IN FEBRUARY, 1941
(in grammes per week)

Foods	
Bread	1,400–1,750
Wheaten flour	100
Meat	150–175
Butter	Nil
Margarine	62.5
Sugar	100–188
Eggs	1
Groats	62–112
Macaroni	62–112
Jam	300
Coffee (substitute)	25–62

Approximate equivalents: 100 grammes = 3½ ozs. 1000 grammes = 2¼ lbs.
Explanation: When two figures are given they denote minimum and maximum.

It follows from the tables that in the General Gouvernement, and in Warsaw in particular, only very little difference is made between children and adults, both categories of consumers being assigned the one ration (except in the case of bread). Comparing these tables with those for the "incorporated" areas (see POLISH FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW, No. 55) we see that the majority of items in the rations for the Polish population of the General Gouvernement are allowed in quantities only from twenty to forty per cent. of what the German population in the "incorporated" areas receive, and in the case of certain articles (meat, sugar) only fifty per cent. of what the Poles in the "incorporated" areas receive. Still more telling is the fact that Polish adults in the General Gouvernement are allocated only thirty to forty per cent. of the rations issued to German children in the "incorporated" areas. Even so these comparisons are only theoretical, for we must emphasize again that the Polish population in the General Gouvernement frequently cannot get even these miserable quantities.

Other circumstances and facts also testify to the effects of the economic exploitation to which the Germans are subjecting this area, in the sphere of food supplies as elsewhere. We can mention only certain of these:

(*a*) The quality of the bread allocated to the Poles is extremely poor. It is composed of a mixture of potatoes, horse-chestnuts and acorns with a minimum admixture of flour; it is black, bitter and indigestible, and sticks to the mouth.

(*b*) As the production of butter and other fats in the General Gouvernement covers barely twenty per cent. of requirements, these articles are in practice almost impossible to obtain. Moreover, the Germans requisition the whole of the harvest of oil plants, as well as lard and tallow, so that almost the only fats which the consumer gets through legal purchase is colza oil.

(*c*) The jam allocated to Poles is manufactured chiefly from beetroot.

(*d*) For the greater part of 1941 potatoes were not issued at all on ration cards in most of the districts of Warsaw, owing to transport difficulties and the farmers' opposition to supplying their quotas.

(*e*) Milk is officially allocated only to the smallest children. Full cream milk is available only for infants, children over the age of two receive only skimmed milk. Shops receive an allocation of milk only when "the need is officially confirmed." In practice there is some 75 per cent. shortage compared with requirements in milk for infants, and older children get almost no milk at all. By legal means adults can never obtain milk.

(*f*) Certain articles, such as sugar, rice, groats, meat and fats, are almost unobtainable on the cards.

A highly significant episode may be quoted here, characteristic of the methods applied by the Germans. In the spring of 1942, the Polish population in the General Gouvernement was officially notified that they had been allotted additional rations of sugar, at the rate of 750 grammes per week per head of the population (1 lb. 10 ounces). These rations, however, were never distributed. Instead, a few days later, there appeared a statement by Governor-General Frank, thanking the Polish population for . . . voluntarily ceding their sugar rations to the German soldiers fighting on the front.

As we see, the Polish population is only theoretically assured of food supplies by the ration system. In practice all they can obtain on their ration cards is bread and jam.

Rations for Workers

It would be inaccurate to deduce that the Germans are starving all sections of the Polish nation equally, without exception. Their methods in this regard are systematic and adapted to German requirements. Even their ruthlessly planned policy of oppression comes at times into conflict with immediate German interests, and must yield to the requirements of the military machine.

In the Goering-Frank secret circular already quoted there is a passage devoted to this point. It reads:

"In the sphere of food supplies to the population people employed in concerns of vital and military importance must be maintained in a state of efficiency."

Following on this, the department of the Governor-General sent out a secret circular dated Cracow, February 26th, 1940 (Nr G.Z.Icg. 16/40) to all labour bureaux and industrial establishments of category "A" (*A-Betriebe*) in which the food rations for this category of workers was laid down. (See Table IV.)

TABLE IV

OFFICIAL RATIONS IN GENERAL GOUVERNEMENT FOR WORKING POPULATION* IN 1940
(in grammes per week)

Food	Poles	Volks-deutsche	Reichs-deutsche
Bread	1750	2100	2100
Wheaten flour	250	250	250
Special nourishing foods ...	200	400	500
Meat and meat products ...	250	500	1000
Butter and fats	125	250	375
Sugar	125	250	500
Potatoes	5250	5250	5250
Eggs	—	4	6
Cheese	—	125	250
Coffee (substitute)	100	100	150

Dash (—) denotes that the ration was not allotted.
Approximate equivalents: 100 grammes = 3½ ozs.; 1000 grammes = 2¼ lbs.
Explanation: * Only those who are engaged in concerns of vital or military importance.

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Comparing the rations for the privileged sections of Polish workers with the rations for normal Polish consumers, given in Table I, we see that the difference is not very great in quantitative regards. A more fundamental difference consists in the fact that these workers are assured of obtaining these rations in the workers' shops or co-operatives, whereas the rest of the population have no such certainty. Table IV also enables us to reveal how badly the Polish workers are treated by comparison with German workers: In almost every case their rations are only a half or a third of those supplied to the higher category of German workers (*Reichsdeutsche*).

The Nutritional Value of the Ration

From the tables the reader can see that the order issued by Governor-General Frank "to reduce the food rations to the minimum" means in practice that the Poles are allocated starvation rations, completely inadequate to satisfy the most fundamental needs of the human body. This is confirmed from other sources also.

The League of Nations publication, "The Problem of Nutrition" (Vol. 2 Report on the physiological bases of nutrition, Geneva, 1936), states that the organism of a grown-up person, man or woman, living a normal life in a moderate climate, and not engaged on physical labour, requires food with a nutritional value of 2,400 calories daily. Other authorities fix the minimum at 3,000 calories daily. Persons performing heavy physical labour need a further 300 calories for every hour's such labour. Thus a worker employed eight hours daily in heavy industry would need 4,800 calories daily. While the nutritional value of the normal German ration is some 1,800 calories, the same value of the ration allocated to the Polish normal consumer does not exceed 700 to 800 calories daily, or barely 30 per cent. of what is essential. In the case of Polish workers this rate is even more unfavourable.

Therefore, over twenty million people in the General Gouvernement are deliberately being reduced below the subsistence level. The German authorities are pursuing this course in full accordance with the intentions of the German overlords, who make no attempt to conceal those intentions.

"Do the British really think that our great stocks of provisions are intended to feed the friends of England?" the VOLKISCHER BEOBACHTER asked in an article quoted in THE TIMES for August 14th, 1940.

In such conditions it is hardly to be wondered at that not only has horseflesh become a common article of food in Poland, but that the consumption of dogs' and cats' flesh is almost in common use, and that there are districts where the people cook the bark of trees and the hides of dead animals. Is it surprising that the general standard of health in Poland is terribly low, and that disease and starvation are carrying off more and more of the population?

The Black Market

The conditions we have described completely explain why large numbers of Poles—those, of course, who can manage and afford to do so—make up their inadequate legal rations by the purchase of food on the black market, which has grown to astonishing dimensions. In the endeavour to meet at least their most urgent needs they risk imprisonment and even their lives. How extensive the trade has become is indicated by the reports received from Warsaw that Polish people not only buy necessary articles of food on the black market, but that the poorer classes are frequently forced to trade their meat or other more valuable rations in order to get enough bread to keep themselves alive.

Prices on the black market are high beyond all belief. Apart from the inevitable rise in price due to the fact of scarcity, the great risk run by producers, distributors and purchasers alike combines to send the prices rocketing. The punishment imposed by the German authorities for buying or selling in the black market include the death penalty or deportation for forced labour, and only exceptionally is imprisonment inflicted. Black market prices also have to allow for loss of goods by confiscation, as well as for bribes to the German authorities in order to escape the heavy penalties that otherwise would be involved.

In the endeavour to stop the mass supply of commodities to the black market, late in May, 1941, the German authorities introduced great restrictions on railway passenger traffic and very strict control of goods transport. These regulations led to a serious shortage of food generally and to a further severe rise in black market prices. This is shown in the following table of prices on the Warsaw black market in the early summer of 1941.

TABLE V

PRICES ON THE WARSAW BLACK MARKET IN SUMMER, 1941
(in zlotys)

Food		First Half of May	June 3rd	June 7th
Potatoes	(kilo)	3	5	6
Black bread	,,	12	14	23
White bread	,,	12–15	18	23
White flour	,,	8–10	25–30	30–40
Groats	,,	6–8	×	30
Meat	,,	20–30	25	×
Lard	,,	30	40	50
Butter	,,	40	50	67
Sugar	,,	10	40	50
Eggs	(each)	0.80	1.50	1.70
Milk	(litre)	2.50–2.80	3.50	×

Approximate equivalents: 1 kilo=2¼ lbs.; 1 litre=1.75 pints.
The pre-war exchange rate was about: 25 zlotys=£1; 1 zloty=10d.

We may add that, so far as the General Gouvernement is concerned, the German policy of maximum prices has been in general a complete failure, and the regulations restricting prices have had no effect whatever. Prices in the illegal trade are completely out of proportion to the earnings of the Polish people, these being maintained artificially at a pre-war or even lower level. In order to keep wages as low as possible, the occupying authorities have instituted special wage tariffs, and labour inspectors watch to see that these are not exceeded. They have even gone so far as to demand a lowering of wage rates, and when collective agreements are being concluded the inspectors insist that they shall state the maximum wage rates, instead of the minimum, as was the case in pre-war days. On the other hand, the hours

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of work for all categories of labour have been extended without extra payment.

The Jewish Food Situation

The Jewish section of the population, as we know, is subjected to general living conditions which are still worse than those of the Poles, and the uncertainty of life for them is increased by the continually changing orders and regulations affecting their day-to-day existence. In regard to food supplies, they are brought under a completely separate system, which is obviously aimed at depriving them of the most elemental necessities of life.

The separate and isolated quarters of towns which the German authorities have assigned as ghettoes for the Jewish inhabitants are theoretically autonomously administered and are completely cut off from the outside world. They are under the supervision of special German commissaries, who have unrestricted powers. Economic life inside the ghetto, and in particular the question of food supplies for its inhabitants, is in the hands of the Jewish Council (*Jüdenrat*). All trade and commodity exchange, including the supply of foodstuffs, goes on through a special German organ known as the *Transferstelle*. This department is responsible for allocating and selling to the ghetto all kinds of goods, including food, as the respective German food or other departments allow at any moment. The goods thus obtained by the ghetto are distributed to the shops by the "Supplies Establishment," which is a special department under the Jewish Council.

As a rule, the ghetto receives foodstuffs of two main categories. The first group consists of rationed goods, which are allocated in accordance with the number of inhabitants and on a ration unit basis. It includes the main food articles such as bread, meat, sugar, fats, etc. The second category consists of goods which are not rationed in the strict sense of the word, but of which the sale to Jews is controlled and for which permission has to be given on each occasion by the German authorities. No article of food not included in either of these two categories can be sold to Jews, either outside or inside the ghettoes. In May, 1941, the German authorities gave permission for barely 154 tons of vegetables to be taken into the Warsaw ghetto, this amount working out at about two-thirds of a pound per person per month. And this was a comparatively high quota, for in the previous month only 48 tons had been allowed to come on to the ghetto market. In June, 1941, the quota of potatoes assigned to the ghetto was 67 tons and other vegetables 189.5 tons. In August there was some improvement in the situation, for the German authorities permitted the import of 100 tons of vegetables weekly into the ghetto, this working out at nine ounces per person.

The quantity allowed in the ration is continually changed, the tendency being to reduce the allotted quantities. The possession of a ration card is by no means a guarantee that a ration will be obtainable. From information received through neutral sources, the weekly rations of the most important articles of food in the Warsaw ghetto during a certain unspecified period of 1941 were as follows:

	Bread.	*Meat.*	*Sugar.*	*Fats.*
In grammes	420	125	45	25
In ounces (app.)	14¾	4½	1⅝	⅞

Conditions were somewhat better in Cracow, where in March, 1941, the weekly ration for Jews was:

	Bread.	*Meat.*	*Sugar.*	*Fats.*
In grammes	1,000-1,090	None.	50	30
In ounces (app.)	36 - 39¼	—	1¾	1

The above figures call for no comment.

In such conditions the starving Jewish population has to resort to the purchase of food on the ghetto black market, which is supplied by smuggling over the walls at the danger of life, and by the extensive bribery of the German guards. Naturally, prices on the ghetto black market are considerably higher even by comparison with those on the Polish black market. The following figures relating to the autumn of 1941 (in Warsaw) illustrate this disparity:

Per kilo. (2¼ lbs.)	*Polish black market.*	*Ghetto black market.*
Bread	15 zlotys.	32 zlotys.
Potatoes	4.31 „	8.50 „
Fats	45 „	90 „

(Pre-war exchange rate was about 25 zlotys to the pound.)

Thus, while the rations for Jews are only a half or a third of the rations for Poles, the prices on the black market are twice as high. A Jewish worker employed on forced labour, and receiving four zlotys a day (about 3s. 4d.) could at that time (autumn, 1941) buy for that amount only half a kilo (1⅛ lb.) of potatoes; a Jewish tailor earning 50 zlotys weekly could buy only half a kilo of fats.

Therefore the only hope of survival for the great majority of the Jews was in the communal assistance provided by the Jewish Council and various charitable organizations. In the summer of 1941 soup kitchens in the Warsaw ghetto were providing some 120,000 portions daily. This represented assistance to barely 25 per cent. of the total number of inhabitants, and only half the number actually needing help.

The terrible shortage of food, coupled with the serious overcrowding and insanitary conditions of the ghettoes, has led to a fearful increase in the mortality rate from month to month. In August, 1941, there were 5,620 deaths in the Warsaw ghetto, while in June, 1941 (the latest month for which figures have been available), there were only 396 births. The inevitable decline in ghetto population thus resulting was compensated for by the continual influx of Jews driven into the ghettoes by the German authorities, who rounded them up not only from all over Poland, but from almost all Europe.

In July, 1942, the German authorities started a process of wholesale extermination of the Jewish population of the ghettoes.

Food Rations in Other Occupied Countries

We have devoted two issues of the POLISH FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW to a discussion of the methods being applied by the Germans in one single sphere of Polish life. We have tried to do it objectively, utilizing and collating such materials as are available. There is one further aspect of the question which we may well consider. Poland is not the only country under German occupation, and it is of interest to compare the food rations of Polish population with those allowed in other occupied countries. Table VI below enables us to make

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that comparison for December, 1941, the month for which accurate figures are available:

TABLE VI

OFFICIAL RATIONS IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED TERRITORIES FOR NORMAL CONSUMERS IN DECEMBER, 1941
(in ounces (app.) per week)

	Bread	Meat	Sugar	All Fats
Germany	80¾	14	17½	8¾
Belgium	55	8¼	8	3¼
Czechoslovakia (Protectorate only)	62	14	10½	6
France	68	9	4½	4
Luxemburg (as in Germany)	80¾	14	17½	8¾
Netherlands	63	10½	9	6¾
Norway	65	Unofficially Rationed	7	7½
Poland :—				
Poles in areas incorporated in the Reich	80¾	8¾	8¾	3½
Poles in General Gouvernement	49–61½	4½	4½	3½
Jews in General Gouvernement	14½	4½	1⅝	9/10
German population (as in Germany)	80¾	14	17½	8¾

Explanation : Figures for Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Netherlands and Norway are quoted from "Rationing under Axis Rule," issued by the Inter-Allied Information Committee, London, May, 1942. For Denmark, Greece and Yugoslavia, no reliable figures are available.

The table shows that in regard to food rations the people of Poland are worse off than those of any other country. This further confirms the strictly political aims which Germany is pursuing in regard to Poland. Here the Germans are playing for higher stakes than anywhere else. So far as other occupied countries are concerned, the Germans are chiefly anxious to obtain the greatest possible economic advantages. But in Poland they are brutally and ruthlessly aiming at the complete and lasting subjugation of the country, the enslavement of its inhabitants and the extermination of the Polish nation as such. The Nazis firmly believe that the end justifies the means: and one of the means to the end of German domination is mass starvation.

Conclusion

Summarizing the situation as we have found it in the "incorporated" areas and in the General Gouvernement, the Statement reveals the following irrefutable and outstanding facts:

Firstly, that the shortage of food which has existed for upwards of three years in Poland, who used to be exporters of food in pre-war days, is due to the fact that the greater part of Polish production is carried off by the Germans to meet the needs of the Reich and the German armies.

Secondly, the German armies of occupation, German officials and German colonists in Poland have ample food, and frequently are fed better than they would be in Germany.

Thirdly, the food rations allocated to the Polish and Jewish population are in accordance with the racial status which Nazism has assigned to them. The Polish population in the best case receives not more than half the ration allocated to Germans, and the Jewish population has to be satisfied with token rations.

It would be erroneous to conclude that the Germans, in robbing the temporarily subjugated nations of their food, are motivated only by their temporary difficulties, and only obeying some sort of necessity, or that their action is dictated simply by the need for assuring adequate feeding of the German people in order to enable them to cope with the waging of an unprecedented war.

Their policy is more sinister, and in its results intended to be more permanent. In accordance with the proclaimed Nazi theories, the Germans consider that they possess a lasting and absolute right to enjoy a higher standard of living than other nations because of what they regard as their racial superiority.

Dr. Ley, the German Minister for Labour, made this abundantly clear when he wrote in *Der Angriff* on January 31, 1940, the following words:

"A lower race needs less room, less clothing, less food and less culture than a higher race. The Germans cannot live in the same fashion as the Poles and the Jews. . . . More bread, more clothes, more living room, more culture, more beauty: these our race must have, or it dies."

Poland was the first country to be conquered by Hitler's armies, with the consequence that the Germans had earlier opportunities of applying their theories of exploitation and extermination there than anywhere else. In the German plans, Poland was to lose her independent existence for ever and to cease to exist as a separate State, and consequently she has become an experimental field and simultaneously a living example of what the German new order would mean in that part of Europe.

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